

About James Hodde:

I caught the train fever at a very young age as my mother worked for Island Creek Coal Company, A subsidiary of C&O. She brought home calendars, schedules, etc. I also had a love affair with Cincinnati streetcars before their demise about 1951.

After my Dad came home from World War II he built a huge Lionel setup for Christmas 1946. This later evolved into an American Flyer S gauge layout.

As a teenager I got interested in cars and girls and Mom and Dad thought I was finished with trains – but an outfit called Globe (Athearn) came out with HO F-7s for 98 cents. I painted a whole mess of them and still have most of them on display.

Cincinnati Central is my third HO layout and has been under construction in its current location since 1981. I joined the NMRA about 1968 and became a Life Member shortly thereafter. I currently hold four AP certificates.

About the Railroad:

The Cincinnati Central (greatly influenced by the C&O and successors).

The HO railroad is located in West Virginia and Southeastern Kentucky. The original layout was 14' x 24' and now includes a modular 10' x 20' extension.

The bench work is mostly L girder while the track is mostly Atlas code 100. The railroad uses Digitrax control.

The scenery is Hydrocal over screen wire or wadded newspaper. Some plaster gauze and Structolite have also been used. The scenery is about 90% complete. The scenery includes some removable sections to allow access to the hidden staging yards.

The current railroad project is a signal system controlled from a CTC style panel.

The railroad includes over 70 active locomotives ranging from shunts to AC Wide Cabs with no specific era. There are over 400 revenue freight cars, 12 passenger cars and 32 cabooses. The buildings range from the 1956 era Revell farm set to 1999 Walthers Waterfront Warehouse. All the mainline switches are powered (mostly by Tortoise machines) and signaled. The signals are a combination of Oregon and scratchbuilt. The layout held its first operating session in April 2001 and it was just the first of many more.